



UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

REGION II
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ATLANTA, GEORGIA 30303-8931

December 29, 2004

Tennessee Valley Authority
ATTN: Mr. K. W. Singer
Chief Nuclear Officer and
Executive Vice President
6A Lookout Place
1101 Market Street
Chattanooga, TN 37402-2801

SUBJECT: BROWNS FERRY NUCLEAR PLANT UNIT 1 RECOVERY - PARTIAL
REACTOR OVERSIGHT PROCESS CORNERSTONE TRANSITION

Dear Mr. Singer:

In accordance with the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission's (NRC) Inspection Manual Chapter (MC) 2509, "Browns Ferry Unit 1 Restart Project Inspection Program," an individual cornerstone of safety may become monitorable by inspection and performance indicators (PIs) under the NRC's routine reactor oversight process (ROP) once it has been determined that: 1) licensee corrective actions for restart issues have been completed, and 2) performance improvement changes have been made. Once a cornerstone is monitorable by the ROP, MC 0609, "Significance Determination Process (SDP)," will be utilized to characterize the significance of findings resulting from the routine baseline inspection effort of MC 2515, "Light-Water Reactor Inspection Program - Operations Phase," for that cornerstone. Likewise, MC 0608, Performance Indicator Program, will be utilized to evaluate and process the PI data submitted for Browns Ferry (BF) for that cornerstone. Additionally, in accordance with MC 2509, enforcement for any findings from NRC inspections in a cornerstone monitorable by the ROP should be administered in accordance with the Commission's current Enforcement Policy. The transition of Unit 1 to the full oversight provided by the ROP will be a gradual-phased approach to monitoring on an individual cornerstone basis, with the understanding that MC 2515 and MC 0305, "Operating Reactor Assessment Program," cannot be fully applied until all cornerstones are monitorable by the ROP.

The NRC has determined the criteria for transitioning the following four cornerstones of safety have been met: Occupational Radiation Safety, Public Radiation Safety, Emergency Preparedness, and Physical Protection. Corrective actions for restart issues have been completed and performance improvement changes have been made in these cornerstone areas. Programmatic aspects of the Radiation Safety, Emergency Preparedness, and Physical Protection programs have been verified as satisfactory during the operation of BF Units 2 and 3. The NRC also conducted focused transition inspections of these programs for Unit 1 to verify the suitability of the cornerstone to be monitored under the ROP.

NRC Inspection Reports 05000259/2004006, 05000259/2004007, 05000259/2004008 and 05000259/2004010 document these focused inspection reviews for transitioning the aforementioned cornerstones to the ROP. Information regarding the BF Unit 1 Recovery and NRC Inspection Reports can be found at <http://www.nrc.gov/NRR/OVERSIGHT/ASSESS/bf1-recovery.html>.

Based on these inspections, the NRC has determined that the ROP cornerstones of Occupational Radiation Safety, Public Radiation Safety, Emergency Preparedness, and Physical Protection will be incorporated into the routine ROP baseline inspection program at your BF Unit 1 reactor facility. These changes will be effective January 1, 2005. Our inspection plan for calendar year (CY) 2005, which will be distributed with our ROP annual assessment letter for the operating units, will reflect this transition of these areas to be monitored solely using the ROP baseline inspections. Additionally, PI data for these four cornerstones would need to be submitted commencing with the first quarter of CY 2005. Because all of the PIs for these four cornerstones are common to the Browns Ferry site and not unit specific, there is no need to submit historical PI data for Unit 1.

In accordance with 10 CFR 2.390 of the NRC's "Rules of Practice," a copy of this letter and its enclosure will be available electronically for public inspection in the NRC Public Document Room or from the Publicly Available Records (PARS) component of NRC's document system (ADAMS). ADAMS is accessible from the NRC Web site at <http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/adams.html> (the Public Electronic Reading Room). Please contact me if you have any questions regarding this implementation of MC 2509 for the cornerstone transition.

Sincerely,

/RA/

Stephen J. Cahill, Chief
Reactor Projects Branch 6
Division of Reactor Projects

Docket No. 50-259
License No. DPR-33

cc: (See page 3)

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